

A Conversation Analysis of Theatrical Discourse

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Introduction

This paper, firstly, deals with a pragmatic analysis of conversation in terms of adjacency pairs and irony in theatrical discourse, observed mainly in *Waiting for Godot*¹ by Samuel Beckett². Secondly, adopting pragmatic approach rather than sociolinguistic approach, this paper also focuses on hedges and politeness.

In Chapter 2 will be included five categories: *repair* which will be divided into self-repair, other-repair, self-initiated and other-initiated; *insertion sequence* which means an inserted sequence between the other adjacency pairs; *rapid/multiple turn-taking* in which turn-taking goes very fast and occurs many times; *code-switching* which is the change of style in speech; *relationships between irony and politeness*.

Chapter 3 deals with the relationships between the Cooperative Principle and hedges in *Waiting for Godot*. These will be divided into seven categories, which are *the Cooperative Principle*, *quality/quantity hedges*, *progressive aspect*, *modals*, *adverbs*, *verbs* and *verb phrases*, *linking words/adverbials* respectively.

In Chapter 4, pragmatic considerations will be examined. Pragmatic properties of adjacency pairs and hedges and the relationships concerning these will be observed.

The theatrical discourse analyzed here is taken from *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett, *The Gioconda Smile*³ by Aldous Huxley and *Here we are*⁴ by Dorothy Parker.

The reason why I decided to carry out these analyses is that theatrical/dramatic discourse can be helpful to understanding our conversations if we study the interaction in dramas .

I . Adjacency Pairs and Irony

1. Adjacency pairs

(1) Definition

Adjacency pairs are sequences of two related utterances which are given by two different speakers. The second utterance is always a response to the first. In the following example, Vladimir asks a question and Estragon answers the question:

First utterance---Vladimir: *What are you doing?*

Second utterance---Estragon: *Taking off my boot.* (Beckett, 2000, p.2)

This sequence of question-answer is an adjacency pair. Other examples of adjacency pairs are greeting-greeting, invitation-acceptance/non-acceptance, offer-acceptance/non-acceptance, complaint-apology, complaint-denial.

2. Repair

(1) Definition

Repair, in conversation analysis, is 'a term for ways in which errors, unintended forms, or misunderstandings are corrected by speakers or others during conversation' (Richards *et al.*,1992,

p.314). In this paper, repair is classified as self-repair or other repair and self-initiated or other-initiated. A repair which is made by the speaker him/herself (i.e. self-initiated) is known as a self repair. For example:

1 A: I bought a, *uhm...what do you call it...a bottle of Beaujolais nouveau.*

A repair made by another person (i.e. other-initiated) is known as other repair, in the example 2.

2 Estragon: You're sure it was this evening?

Vladimir: *What?*

Estragon: *That we were to wait.* (ibid., p.7)

Roberta (1987, pp.14-16) writes in detail:

Repair procedures are grouped in two separate classes: self-repairs, those in which the problematic item is produced and corrected by the same interlocutor; and other-repairs, in which the problem is addressed by a participant other than the one who has produced it. Two further subclasses are distinguishable in each of the above: self-initiated and other-initiated. In the first case, the producer of the trouble-item

signals its presence to the other interlocutor(s), whereas in the case of other-initiated repairs, a party other than the one that produced the violation highlights the need for repair.

SELF-REPAIRS

SELF-INITIATED

A: When do you want this book back?

B: Tuesday night - I mean Wednesday night at the meeting.
(fabricated)

OTHER-INITIATED

A: Look, I know people like that.

B: Like what?

A: People who don't trust anyone, who don't care about anything, they just go after money.

B: Oh.

(real but reconstruction)

OTHER-REPAIRS

SELF-INITIATED

A: I talked to Mr. Weinap - what's his name?

B: Weinapple.

(fabricated)

OTHER-INITIATED

(Singing a line from "I'll be There" by Jackson Five)

A: You and I must make a pack, we must bring starvation

B: Starva: tion

C: Starva: tion, boy it's sal/ /vation.

A: Salvation.

(adapted from Harness Goodwin, 1983)

Other examples in *Waiting for Godot*:

3 Vladimir: Where was I...*How's your foot?* (Q1,self-repair, self-initiated)

Estragon: Swelling visibly. (A1)

Vladimir: Ah yes, the two thieves.

Do you remember the story? (Beckett, 2000, p.4)

In (Q1) above, Vladimir tries to find out what he talked about. Then he remembers that

Estragon suffers from his boots, so Vladimir asked. That is self-repair. What is interesting is that Vladimir changes the topic after (A1). It sounds ironical that Vladimir seemingly doesn't care about Estragon's sore foot.

4 Vladimir: And yet...*(Pause)*...*how is it -this is not boring you I hope - how is it* that of the four Evangelists only one speaks of a thief being saved. The four of them were there - *or thereabouts* - and only one speaks of a thief being saved. *(Pause)* Come on, Gogo, return the ball, can't you, once in a way? (self-repair, self-initiated) (ibid., p.4)

3. Insertion sequence

Insertion sequences have two different definitions; that is, general and pragmatic.

(1) General definition

Insertion sequence occurs when speakers stop their utterances and insert an utterance which is not related to the main subject. Richards *et al.* mention as follows:

In conversation, speakers may interrupt themselves and insert an utterance which is not related to the main conversation. This utterance is often referred to as an insertion sequence. There may be numerous reasons for the sequence. Often it may be caused by an external event, e.g. a ring/knock at the door, ringing telephone:

A: ...and I actually told her that...(doorbell rings)

Excuse me, that must be Al. He's probably forgotten his key.

A: (returns) Now, what was I saying before? Ah, yes. She said...

In many cases, the original conversation is continued after the insertion sequence. Sometimes it is referred to briefly such as:

Sorry for the interruption. Now where were we? What was I saying? etc.

(1992, p.183)

(2) Pragmatic definition

The first utterance of adjacency pairs sometimes does not receive the second utterance immediately. There are many cases where a question-answer sequence will be retarded while another question-answer sequence interjects. The sequence will take the form of Q1-Q2-A2-A1 and then the middle pair (Q2-A2) will be called an insertion sequence. For example:

5 Estragon: I'm hungry.

Vladimir: Do you want a carrot? (Q1)

Estragon: *Is that all there is?*(Q2)

Vladimir: *I might have some turnips.* (A2)

Estragon: Give me a carrot. (A1) (Beckett, 2000, p.12)

There is a pair which consists of making a request-accepting the request (Q1-A1), with an insertion sequence of a question-answer pair (Q2-A2) which seems to be a condition of the acceptance (A1) being provided.

In this paper here, of course, insertion sequences are analyzed based on pragmatic definition. Yule (1996, pp.77-78) explains in detail insertion sequences as follows:

Jean: Could you mail this letter for me? (Q1=Request)

Fred: Does it have a stamp on it? (Q2)

Jean: Yeah. (A2)

Fred: Okay. (A1=Acceptance)

The delay in acceptance in the example above, created by the insertion sequence, is one type of indication that not all first parts necessarily receive the kind of second parts the speaker might anticipate. Delay in response symbolically, marks potential expected answer. Delay represents distance between what is expected and what is provided.

Delay is always interpreted as meaningful. In order to see how what is expected within certain types of adjacency pairs.

Examples in *Waiting for Godot*:

6 Estragon: (*Despairingly*). Ah! (*Pause*.) You're sure it was here? (Q1)

Vladimir: *What?* (Q2)

Estragon: *That we were to wait.* (A2)

Vladimir: He said by the tree. (A1)

(*They look at the tree.*) Do you see any others ? (Beckett, 2000, p.6)

7 Estragon: You're sure it was this evening? (Q1)

Vladimir: *What?* (Q2)

Estragon: *That we were to wait.* (A2)

Vladimir: He said Saturday. (*Pause*.) I think. (A1) (ibid., p.7)

These two examples show the same Q1 - Q2 - A2 - A1 pattern. These Q2 - A2 pairs are insertion sequences. In these conversations, it seems that Vladimir isn't sure what Godot said

because Vladimir answered with a pronoun 'he' instead of 'I'. Vladimir referred to it indirectly.

8 Vladimir: I'm curious to hear what he has to offer.

Then we'll take it or leave it.

Estragon: What exactly did we ask him for? (Q1)

Vladimir: *Were you not there?* (Q2)

Estragon: *I can't have been listening.* (A2)

Vladimir: Oh...nothing very definite. (A1) (ibid., p.10)

In this example, Q2 - A2 is also an insertion sequence. Here this Q2 implies that Vladimir is appalled at Estragon. So the question (Q1) 'What exactly did we ask him for ?' was fulfilled by (A1) 'Oh...nothing very definite.'

4. Rapid/ Multiple Turn-taking

(1) Definition

This term doesn't have a distinct definition so I would like to explain the effect of the conversations in *Waiting for Godot*. In general, turn-taking is defined as 'the role of speaker and listener change constantly in conversation. The person who speaks first becomes a listener as soon as the person addressed takes his or her turn in the conversation by beginning to speak.' (Richards et al., 1992, p.390) Here "rapid/ multiple" is added to the term 'turn-taking' to specify the speedy and repetitive exchange of speech. This kind of speech between two characters is quite similar to 'kakeai' in Japanese *Kabuki* or *Jooruri* plays.

9 Estragon: And what did he reply?

Vladimir: That he'd see.

Estragon: *That he couldn't promise anything.*

Vladimir: *That he'd have to think it over.*

Estragon: *In the quiet of his home.*

Vladimir: *Consult his family.*

Estragon: *His friends.* (repair)

Vladimir: *His agents.* (repair)

Estragon: *His correspondents.* (repair)

Vladimir: *His books.* (repair)

Estragon: *His bank account.* (repair)

Vladimir: Before taking a decision. (ibid., p.11)

In this rapid/multiple turn-taking, repair is also included. This turn-taking is not

collaborative to participants. But it can be called *cross talk* that makes this conversation more humorous. Estragon and Vladimir try to show off their own superiority in that either of the two knows about Godot better.

5. Conversational Code-Switching

(1) General Definition

A change which is made by a speaker (or writer) from one language or a variety of language to another one. Code-switching can take place in a conversation when one person speaks one language and the other person answers in a different language. A speaker may start talking in one language and then change to another one in the middle of his/her speech, and it sometimes occurs even in the middle of a sentence. Richards *et al.* (1992, p.58) give an example, from the speech of a German immigrant in Australia:

A: Das handle on enema *secondhand dealer and his son.*

B: That is about a ...

(2) Conversational Code-Switching in *Waiting for Godot*

In *Waiting for Godot*, not a change of language but a change of style of speech takes place. For example:

10 Vladimir: (*Hurt, coldly.*) *May one enquire where His Highness spent the night?*

Estragon: In a ditch.

Vladimir: (*Admiringly.*) A ditch! Where?

Estragon: (*Without gesture.*) Over there. (Beckett, 2000, p.1)

Here this Code-Switching is informal versus formal. It also can be said intimacy versus non intimacy. Deictic Code-Switching also takes place. Estragon and Vladimir are intimate but Vladimir used a formal style and a non intimate deixis 'one' and 'His Highness' to refer to Estragon. These Code-Switching have an effect which makes a psychological distance to the addressee.

6. Irony and Politeness

(1) Definition of Irony

An expression in which something is different from and often opposite to its literal meaning. An expression or utterance marked by a deliberate contrast between apparent and intended

meaning. A literary style employing such contrasts for humorous or rhetorical effect. Fujita (2005) says:

Irony: the expression of thought in a form that conveys its opposite. The word's meaning is reversed by juxtaposing it into a semantic field of thought inappropriate to the speaker and/or subject. By this casting of the word into an obviously inappropriate context the writer stimulates a mental response. (Bullinger, 1977, pp. 807-815)

(2) Definition of Politeness

A fixed concept, as in the idea of 'polite social behavior', or proprieties, within a culture. Yule (1996, p.60) writes:

It is also possible to specify a number of different general principles for being polite in social interaction within a particular culture. Some of these might include being tactful, generous, modest, and sympathetic toward others.

(3) Relationships between Irony and Politeness

Irony and politeness in adjacency pairs in conversational discourse will be 'lying an falsely implicating function to protect the addressees' position.

However, hedges will, in contrast to irony, protect the speaker's / hearer's position increasing the degree of ambiguity with the use of modalities and backchannels in conversational discourse.

Hedges versus politeness and Irony versus Politeness are interrelated with each other, since they are connected with speaker and listener's protection. Barbe (1995, p.89) says, 'Irony gives speakers the chance to be aggressive in a seemingly unaggressive way. Irony thus also functions to keep conflict at bay.'

II . Hedges and Politeness

1. The Cooperative Principle

Let me introduce Grice's cooperative principle before examining hedges. The cooperative principle: make your contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.(Yule, 1996, p.37) There are four maxims: try to make your contribution one that is true. (Quality); saying neither more nor less than is cooperatively necessary (Quantity); be relevant (Relation); and be

understandable (Manner). We assume that people are normally going to provide an appropriate amount of information; we assume that they are telling the truth, being relevant, and trying to be as clear as they can. But speakers rarely mention them.

However, there are certain kinds of expressions speakers use to mark that they may violate the principles; that is to say *hedges*.

2. Hedges

(1) Definition

Hedges are the kind of expressions to show that the speaker may be against the maxims or to describe that the speaker wishes to avoid coming straight to the point or to avoid speaking directly. Ronald (1997, p.16) writes:

Hedging can include the use of a wide range of language, including VAGUE LANGUAGE. Hedges occur commonly when a speaker expresses an opinion about somebody or something:

He was *kind of* begging us to write but I probably won't do it.

Well, I mean, I have, you know, never *actually really* liked her as a teacher.

She was *sort of somewhat* mixed up in her feeling about him.

The hedges (in italics) allow speakers to personalize or otherwise mitigate the force of what they say, either because they have no wish to sound definite and authoritative, because they believe the speaker not to be fully acquainted with their propositions or are searching for the right word or expression. In most cases there is sensitivity to 'face', either for purposes of self-protection or because the speaker does not want to put the listener(s) or reader(s) in a face-threatening situation.

Hedges are different from mitigation; from the speaker's view point, consideration and anxiety by the speaker about what a listener feels when a speaker tells directly will be conveyed.

Hedges are used to protect a listener's 'face' and for the purposes of self-protection or not to be authoritative to the listener. (R.Carter and M.McCarthy, 1997, p.16)

Brown and Levinson (1978, p.164) say, 'The communication of ... may be made by a set of hedges oriented to Grice's cooperative dimensions.' So this paper will focus on the interaction in literary discourse according to Grice's Cooperative Principle.

3. Quality/Quantity hedges

(1) Definition

Quality hedges are used when a speaker doesn't know whether his utterance is based on the truth or not and they are used to avoid asserting. Brown and Levinson (1978, p.164) say, 'quality hedges may suggest that the speaker is not taking full responsibility for the truth of his utterance.' For example:

I think.

I guess...

I'm not sure if this is right, but I heard...

Ronald (1997, p.17) mentions as follows:

Hedges and modality in language are closely linked. Many modal verbs contribute to hedging (e.g. may, might, could) and there is an extensive range of adverbs which mitigate the force of what is written or said: for example, *perhaps, probably, generally, normally, slightly, basically, at least.*

Quantity hedges, as Brown and Levinson (1978, p.166) write, give notice that not much or not as precise information is provided as might be expected. For example:

to some extent

more or less

to cut a long story short.

(2) I think/I thought

The following examples from 11 to 15, the speaker, Estragon, uses *I think/I thought* as a discourse marker. *I think/I thought* is a marker of quality hedges since the utterance following it can be either true or ambiguous.

11 Estragon: It's the normal thing.

Vladimir: Is it not?

Estragon: *I think* it is.

Vladimir: *I think* so too. (Beckett, 2000, p.11)

12 Vladimir: (*To Estragon.*) *I think* he's listening.

Estragon: (*Circling about Lucky.*) What?

Vladimir: You can ask him now. He's on the alert.

Estragon: Ask him what?

Vladimir: Why he doesn't put down his bags.

Estragon: I wonder.

Vladimir: Ask him, can't you? (ibid., p.22)

13 Vladimir: I'm glad to see you back. *I thought* you were gone for ever.

Estragon: Me too. (ibid., p.1)

The above *I thought* is used to express the speaker's expectation that Estragon would never come back. That expectation did not turn out to be right so the speaker used the past tense *I thought*.

14 Estragon: *I thought* you said hell.

Vladimir: From death, from death. (ibid., p.5)

15 Estragon: You gave me a fright.

Vladimir: *I thought* it was he. (ibid., p.12)

The past tense *I thought* is also used to imply that the speaker's is not sure whether the speaker's thought is true or not.

(3) I hope

I hope is used to describe the speaker's hope or suggestion without forcing.

16 Vladimir: (*Vehemently*) Let's go!

Pozzo: *I hope* I'm not driving you away. Wait a little longer, you'll never regret it. (ibid., p.21)

17 Vladimir: And yet...(Pause) ...how is it - this is not boring you *I hope* -

how is it that of the four Evangelists only one speaks of a thief being saved. The four of them were there - or thereabouts - and only one speaks of a thief being saved. (Pause) Come on, Gogo, return the ball, can't you, once in a way? (ibid., p.4)

(4) I'm afraid

I'm afraid is used when the speaker has to say something bad for the hearer or something that the speaker may hesitate to say.

18 Vladimir: It is Posso or Bozzo?

Estragon: Pozzo...no...*I'm afraid* I...no...I don't seem to...

(*Pozzo advances threateningly.*) (ibid., p.15)

Estragon hesitated to say that it was Pozzo since Pozzo was approaching to him threateningly.

(5) I don't seem to

I don't seem to is an expression which means 'I don't think' but *I don't seem to* can be a more mitigated expression than *I don't think*.

19 Vladimir: It is Posso or Bozzo?

Estragon: Pozzo...no...I'm afraid I...no...*I don't seem to*...

(*Pozzo advances threateningly.*) (ibid., p.15)

(6) Would/wouldn't

Would and *wouldn't* suggest that not much or not as precise information is given as might be expected.

20 Estragon: Why doesn't he put down his bags?

Pozzo: I too *would* be happy to meet him. The more people I meet the happier I become. From the meanest creature one departs wiser, richer more conscious of one's blessings. Even you...[*He looks at them ostentatiously in turn to make it clear they are both meant*] ...even you, who knows, will have added to my store. (ibid., p.22)

Pozzo is not answering to Estragon's question. *He* in the Pozzo's utterance refers to Godot. The above *would* is used to reduce the force of the speaker's statement.

Also in 21 *would* is used to mitigate the expression, and to express the speaker's surprise modestly.

21 Estragon: Why doesn't he put down his bags?

Pozzo: But that *would* surprise me.

Vladimir: You're being asked a question.

Pozzo: [*Delighted.*] A question! Who? What? A moment ago you were calling me sir, in fear and trembling. Now you're asking me questions. No good will come of this! (ibid., p.22)

In 22, *wouldn't* and *would* are used to soften the speaker's utterance.

22 Pozzo: That was nearly sixty years ago...(*He consults his watch*) ...yes, nearly sixty. (*Drawing himself up proudly.*) You *wouldn't* think it to look at me, *would* you? (ibid., p.26)

(7) *May/might*

May or *might* is a modal which shows possibilities or presumptions. In this section, the characteristic cases of *may* or *might* will be described.

23 Estragon: (*Pointing.*) You *might* button it all the same.

Vladimir: (*Stooping.*) True. (*He buttons his fly.*) Never neglect the little things of life. (ibid., p.2)

24 Vladimir: Let's wait till we know exactly how we stand.

Estragon: On the other hand, it *might* be better to strike the iron before it freezes. (ibid., p.10)

In the example 23 and 24, *might* is used to mitigate the speaker's proposal/suggestion. *Might* is often used for a polite proposal or a frank request. In 24, the speaker uses *it might be better* and it is a more mitigated form of proposal.

In 25, *may* is used to imply that the expectation he (Godot) won't come again today is easy to be noticed.

25 Vladimir: What'll we do?

Estragon: If he came yesterday and we weren't here you *may* be sure he won't come again today. (ibid., p.7)

May in 26 shows that Estragon doesn't have responsibility for his utterance.

26 Vladimir: But you say we were here yesterday.

Estragon: I *may* be mistaken. (ibid., p.7)

In 27, *might* is used to show that Vladimir doesn't have responsibility for his thought.

27 Estragon: (*Violently.*) I'm hungry.

Vladimir: Do you want a carrot?

Estragon: Is that all there is?

Vladimir: I *might* have some turnips. (ibid., p.12)

(8) Must and should

The following utterances, in which other modals, *must* and *should*, are used by Estragon and Vladimir, are not precisely true.

28 Vladimir: Did you ever read the Bible?

Estragon: The Bible...(He reflects.) I *must* have taken a look at it. (ibid., p.4)

Must, as in the above, is used to avoid asserting because the speaker is not sure whether his utterance is true or not.

Should, as in the following, means that he (Godot) is expected to be there.

29 Estragon: He *should* be here.

Vladimir: He didn't say for sure he'd come. (ibid., p.6)

(9) A kind of⁵

A kind of is a term for a vague thing or for speaking roughly about something. Therefore in 30 and 31, the speaker mitigates the utterance.

30 Estragon: I can't have been listening.

Vladimir: Oh...nothing very definite.

Estragon: *A kind of* prayer. (ibid., p.10)

31 Pozzo: Who is he?

Vladimir: Oh, he's a...he's *a kind of* acquaintance. (ibid., p.16)

(10) And so on

And so on has the same meaning as 'etc.' and is a term for indicating that there will be other expectations.

The speaker Vladimir is not sure at all when they will come back.

32 Vladimir: We'll come back tomorrow.

Estragon: And then the day after tomorrow.

Vladimir: Possibly.

Estragon: *And so on*. (ibid., p.6)

(11) Quantity hedges

Quantity hedges which contribute to giving not much or not as precise information as might be expected.

In the following, the adverb *nearly* is a vague expression, meaning approximately.

33 Pozzo: That was *nearly* sixty years ago...(*He consults his watch*) ...yes, *nearly* sixty. (*Drawing himself up proudly*) You wouldn't think it to look at me, would you? (ibid., p.26)

4. Progressive aspect

(1) Definition

The progressive aspect, in some context of communications, can express speaker's feelings and emotions rather than the progressive form in grammar. The progressive aspect might also express the speaker's dissatisfaction and habit or practice. The progressive aspect can be used to mitigate them.

34 Vladimir: There's man all over for you, blaming on his boots the faults of his feet. (*He takes off his hat again, peers inside it, feels about inside it, knocks on the crown, blows into it, puts it on again.*) This *is getting* alarming. (*Silence. Vladimir deep in thought, Estragon pulling at his toes.*) One of the thieves was saved. (*Pause.*) It's a reasonable percentage. (*Pause.*) Gogo. (ibid., p.3)

In 35, progressive passive style is used to express indirectly that the speaker wants the hearer (Pozzo) to answer the Estragon's question.

35 Estragon: Why doesn't he put down his bags?

Pozzo: But that would surprise me.

Vladimir: *You're being asked* a question. (ibid., p.22)

5. Modals

There are many modal verbs which contribute to hedges. The modals show possibilities and assumptions.

(1) Would/ wouldn't

Would/wouldn't is mostly used for the presumptions. *Would/wouldn't* can avoid asserting.

36 Vladimir: Hand in hand from the top of the Eiffel Tower, among the first.

We were presentable in those days. Now it's too late. They
wouldn't even let us up. (*Estragon tears at his boot.*) (ibid., p.2)

The above *wouldn't* is a modal that expresses suppositions. *Wouldn't* is a mitigating term rather than *won't*.

37 Estragon: (*Coldly*) There are times when I wonder if it *wouldn't* be better
for us to part.

Vladimir: You *wouldn't* go far. (ibid., p.8)

In the above utterance, Estragon tries his suggestion to be understated.

38 Estragon: That *would* be too bad, really too bad. (*Pause.*) *Wouldn't* it,
Didi, be really too bad? (*Pause.*) When you think of the beauty
of the way. (*Pause.*) And the goodness of the wayfarers. (*Pause.*
Wheedling.) *Wouldn't* it, Didi? (ibid., p.8)

The above *would* means that the speaker had to tell not a very good or uncomfortable thing for the hearer.

39 Vladimir: True...we don't know him very well...but all the same...

Estragon: Personally I *wouldn't* even know him if I saw him. (ibid., p.15)

In the above, Estragon utters his own thought with *personally*, *wouldn't* and *even* to reinforce his thought but with the way of a presumption.

(2) May/might

May/might also indicates presumptions.

40 Vladimir: What'll we do?

Estragon: If he came yesterday and we weren't here you *may* be sure he
won't come again today. (ibid., p.7)

(3) Must

Must is a modal which describes inevitabilities or presumptions.

41 Vladimir: It *must* be dead.

Estragon: No more weeping.

Vladimir: Or perhaps it's not the season. (ibid., p.6)

6. Adverbs

There are many adverbs which mitigate the force of a speaker's utterances. In this section will be taken up *thereabouts*, *possibly*, *nearly*, *personally*, *perhaps*. These terms express vague ideas or approximation.

(1) Thereabouts

Thereabouts is an adverb which makes a place vague.

42 Vladimir: And yet...(Pause) ...how is it - this is not boring you I hope -
how is it that of the four Evangelists only one speaks of a thief
being saved. The four of them were there - or *thereabouts* - and
only one speaks of a thief being saved. (Pause) Come on, Gogo,
return the ball, can't you, once in a way? (ibid., p.4)

(2) Possibly, Near, Personally

Possibly, *nearly*, *personally* are sometimes used together with *would/wouldn't*.

43 Vladimir: We'll come back tomorrow.

Estragon: And then the day after tomorrow.

Vladimir: *Possibly*.

Estragon: And so on. (ibid., p.6)

44 Estragon: If it hangs you it'll hang anything.

Vladimir: But am I heavier than you?

Estragon: So you tell me. I don't know.

There's an even chance. *Or nearly*. (ibid., p.10)

This 'or nearly' gives an approximated idea to the preceding utterance.

45 Pozzo: That was *nearly* sixty years ago...(He consults his watch) ...yes,
nearly sixty. (Drawing himself up proudly) You *wouldn't* think it
to look at me, *would* you? (ibid., p.26)

46 Vladimir: True...we don't know him very well...but all the same...

Estragon: *Personally* I *wouldn't* even know him if I saw him. (ibid., p.15)

(3) Perhaps

Perhaps is used frequently in *Waiting for Godot*. *Perhaps* indicates that the utterance is not precisely true.

46 Vladimir: It must be dead.

Estragon: No more weeping.

Vladimir: Or *perhaps* it's not the season. (ibid., p.6)

47 Estragon: Look at the slaver.

Vladimir: *Perhaps* he's a half-wit. (ibid., p.18)

48 Pozzo: You know how it is.(*Silence*)

But *perhaps* you don't smoke? (ibid., p.21)

49 Pozzo: (*Silence*.) *Perhaps* you didn't speak? (ibid., p.21)

50 Vladimir: I'm going.

Pozzo: He can no longer endure my presence. I am *perhaps* not particularly human, but who cares? (ibid., p.21)

51 Pozzo: He wants to impress me, so that I'll keep him.

Estragon: What?

Pozzo: *Perhaps* I haven't got it quite right. He wants to modify me, so that I'll give up the idea of parting with him. No, that's not exactly it either. (ibid., p.24)

7. Verbs and Verb Phrases

There are some verbs and verb phrases which mitigate the speaker's request, suggestion and assertion.

(1) Try and Do⁶ ; I Hope; I Don't Seem

52 Vladimir: *Try and put* it on again.

Estragon: (*Examining his foot*.) I'll air it for a bit. (ibid., p.3)

53 Vladimir: And yet...(Pause) ...how is it - this is not boring you *I hope* -
how is it that of the four Evangelists only one speaks of a thief
being saved. The four of them were there - or thereabouts - and
only one speaks of a thief being saved. (Pause) Come on,
Gogo, return the ball, can't you, once in a way? (ibid., p.4)

54 Pozzo: I hope I'm not driving you away. Wait a little longer, you'll never
regret it. (ibid., p.21)

55 Vladimir: It is Posso or Bozzo?

Estragon: Pozzo...no...I'm afraid I...no...I don't seem to...
(*Pozzo advances threateningly*) (ibid., p.15)

(2) I Beg

I beg is a term for asking the hearer something. *I beg your pardon* and *I beg of you* are a kind of conventional expressions.

56 Pozzo: *I beg your pardon?* (*Silence*.) Perhaps you didn't speak? (ibid., p.20)

57 Pozzo: The answer is this. (*To Estragon*.) But stay still, *I beg of you*,
you're making me nervous! (ibid., p.23)

(3) I Wonder; I Think/Thought

These terms are used to express ideas when the speaker is not always sure, or sometimes when he mentions vague ideas.

58 Vladimir: (*To Estragon*.) I think he's listening.

Estragon: (*Circling about Lucky*.) What?

Vladimir: You can ask him now. He's on the alert.

Estragon: Ask him what?

Vladimir: Why he doesn't put down his bags.

Estragon: *I wonder*. (ibid., p.22)

Estragon's answer is ambiguous.

59 Vladimir: I'm glad to see you back. *I thought* you were gone for ever.

Estragon: Me too. (ibid., p.1)

60 Estragon: *I thought* you said hell.

Vladimir: From death, from death. (ibid., p.5)

61 Estragon: It's the normal thing.

Vladimir: Is it not?

Estragon: *I think* it is.

Vladimir: *I think* so too. (ibid., p.11)

62 Estragon: You gave me a fright.

Vladimir: *I thought* it was he. (ibid., p.12)

63 Vladimir: (*To Estragon.*) *I think* he's listening.

Estragon: (*Circling about Lucky.*) What? (ibid., p.22)

8. Linking Words/Adverbials

(1) On the Other Hand

64 Vladimir: (*Gloomily.*) It's too much for one man. (*Pause. Cheerfully.*) *On the other hand*, what's the good of losing heart now, that's what I say. We should have thought of it a million years ago, in the nineties. (ibid., p.2)

(2) For a Bit

65 Vladimir: Show.

Estragon: There's nothing to show.

Vladimir: Try and put it on again.

Estragon: (*Examining his foot.*) I'll air it *for a bit*. (ibid., p.3)

(3) One~and the Other

66 Vladimir: Our saviour. Two thieves. *One* is supposed to have been saved *and the other*..(*He searches for the contrary of saved*)... damned.(ibid., p.4)

(4) Once in a Way

67 Vladimir: And yet...(Pause) ...how is it - this is not boring you I hope -
how is it that of the four Evangelists only one speaks of a thief
being saved. The four of them were there - or thereabouts - and
only one speaks of a thief being saved. (Pause.) Come on,
Gogo, return the ball, can't you, *once in a way?* (ibid., p.4)

(5) And So on

68 Vladimir: We'll come back tomorrow.
Estragon: And then the day after tomorrow.
Vladimir: Possibly.
Estragon: *And so on.* (ibid., p.6)

(6) In One's opinion

69 Estragon: What did we do yesterday?
Vladimir: What did we do yesterday?
Estragon: Yes.
Vladimir: Why...(Angrily) Nothing is certain when you're about.
Estragon: *In my opinion* we were here. (ibid., p.7)

III. Pragmatic Considerations

1. Pragmatic Properties of Adjacency Pairs

(1) Expectancy and Possibilities

Let us assume theoretically that there can be zero context in the following utterance A.

70 A: Do come here tomorrow, please.

Response to A's utterance 70 as a result will be accepting/refusing or sometimes an ambiguous answer. *Expectancy and possibilities* of such occurrences will be less than 50% respectively. Expectancy and possibilities will be assumed as follows:

(in the second utterance)

accepting < 50%

refusing < 50%

ambiguous response=X

However, in actual interaction, such context can never exist.

71 A: Do come, please.

B: Hmm. (Silence)

As in the above, B uses a backchannel in answering A's request. This is ambiguous but it implicates that he will possibly accept it as a result.

(2) Context and hedges

Hedges will in contrast to irony protect the speaker's / hearer's position increasing the degree of ambiguity with the use of modalities and backchannels in conversation discourse.

(3) Irony and Politeness

Irony and politeness in adjacency pairs in conversational discourse will be 'lying an falsely implicating function to protect the addressees' position. Barbe (1995, p.122) says,

Wife (German): "I was just being honest."

Husband (American): "No, you were being tactless." (personal recording)

Politeness strategies can be understood as lies. However, Sweetser (1987) as well as Weinrich (1986) exclude politeness as a potential locus of lying. When we ask in the US *How do you do?*, we expect a set answer, but we do not expect to hear how the addressee really feels, *Well, I have a cold and my back aches*. In other cultures, like German or Danish, this type of exchange would be more and more common.

The above example demonstrates these different expectations, what honesty is for the German wife is tactless for the American husband, different expectations of so-called white lies.

Hedges versus politeness and irony versus politeness are interrelated with each other, since they are connected with the protection of the speaker and listener's positions. Therefore cultural consideration is necessary and the cultural rules/models can be 'effective tool for the purposes of cross-cultural understanding in personal interaction, social life'. (Wierzbicka, 2004, p.575)

2. Pragmatic Properties of Backchannels

(1) Definition of Backchannels

Backchannels are vocal indications to express that a listener is following a speaker's talk. Typical backchannels are *hmm, well, let me see*, and so on.

However, in some context, there are some backchannels which contain implicatures.

72 Nurse: I thought Mrs. Hutton would like to know what happened at
the inquest.

Doris (Mrs. Hutton): Have you heard?

Nurse: We've just seen Dr. Libbard. He's come straight from the court.

Doris: Did he say it was all right?

Nurse: *Well*, it depends on what you call "all right", I don't suppose we
all think quite the same. (Huxley, Scene Two)

In the nurse's utterance, a backchannel 'well' is used as a neutral answer to Doris' question. The nurse's response seems vague and ambiguous but it also seems that the nurse needs a condition to answer the question .

73 Libbard (Doctor): It might very easily have been suicide.

Doris: Do you really think so?

Libbard: (With a smile) *Well*, you tried it, didn't you? I'm very
fond of Henry, but I confess I'm glad I'm not married to him.

(Huxley, Scene Two)

Libbard's response *Well*, implicates he suggests that Doris has already known the answer. That *well* is used to show consideration for the hearer because the speaker wants to try to disagree or oppose. *I confess I'm glad I'm not married to him* is an ironical utterance since Libbard is a man.

The following utterances are taken from *Here we are* (Parker, 1931), which starts with the utterances *Well! Well!*. She and he have just got married and just left for a honeymoon.

74 He: *Well!*

She: *Well!*

He: *Well*, here we are.

She: Here we are, aren't we?

He: Eeyop. I should say we are. Here we are.

In 74, *Well* is repeated since they don't want to say more, or they think they know each other quite enough in that situation.

75 She: *Well!*

He: *Well! Well!* How does it feel to be an old married lady?

She: Oh, it's too soon to ask me that. At least-I mean. Well, I mean, goodness, we've only been married about three hours, haven't we?

Well in 75 is used to express the relieved feeling like 'that's over'.

76 She: Oh, it's too soon to ask me that. At least-I mean. *Well*, I mean, goodness, we've only been married about three hours, haven't we?

As in above, *well* is used to convey that the speaker is trying to answer carefully and honestly.

77 She: It seems like later. I guess it's because it starts getting dark so early.

He: It does, at that. The nights are getting to be pretty long from now on. I mean. I mean- *well*, it starts getting dark early.

In 77, *well* is used because the speaker tries to find a proper word to say.

3. Cooperative Principle and Hedges

Hedges contribute to the speaker who is in danger to violate the Cooperative Principle. The speaker is likely to adopt hedges because the speaker doesn't want the hearer to misunderstand in conversation. On the other hand, the hearer is easily ready for the speaker's utterance by paying attention to hedges.

Conclusion

The pragmatic properties of adjacency pairs have been examined in Chapter 2. In dramatic discourse, self-repair and self-initiated are often used as ironical expressions. Insertion sequence occurs when the speaker or the hearer needs the condition to answer the question. Rapid/multiple turn-taking is played when the speaker wants to show off his/her superiority over the other. Also, rapid/multiple turn-taking contains repair and cross talk, which contribute to the humorous and ironical expression. Code-switching takes place when the speaker wants to make distance to the hearer and it also works for ironical effects to a drama.

The relationships between hedges and politeness should be relevant closely to each other. Hedges are used to protect the speaker/hearer's face or position. In this way, the speaker sometimes may use hedges to make the utterance meaning vague and it will violate the

Cooperative Principle: Quantity and Manner as well. The Cooperative Principle plays an important role in making the listener follow the speaker's utterance so hedges are linked to politeness.

Dramatic conversation can be helpful to understanding our everyday conversation since an author has a tendency to make the most of our natural conversation. Dramatic interaction and our everyday interaction are interrelated. As Roger (1991, p.226) says, 'Psycholinguistic experience' helps people understand the rules and the meaning of practical interaction. In the same way it also helps the author, the writer of fictional dialogues, when he tries to represent or imitate communicative processes. Both of the author and the reader follow the same basic rules of interaction.

Therefore, it also can be said that our natural everyday conversation has relevance to conversation in dramas. We sometimes use expressions chosen from dramas or television shows. In a play or on TV, we sometimes hear or watch what the actors or the characters utter. Such experiences will be able to give us a hint in some cases for choosing a right expression in our daily conversations. In understanding the theatrical discourse generally, should be considered 'the cultural rules or scripts'. (Wierzbicka, 1991, p.576)

Notes

- 1 It is a tragicomedy in two acts, first published in French in 1952 and in English in 1956. The first performance in French was given at the Babylon Theater in Paris, 1953. And the first performance in English was given at the Art Theater, London, on 3 August 1955. This work is a rare one among contemporary dramas which attracts critics and scholars' interest. For this reason, since then, various interpretations have been tried.
- 2 *Samuel Beckett* was born in Ireland, 1906 and is a complete bilingual writer, who translates his work from French into English by his own efforts or with the help of cooperators.
- 3 This play is a play from the story in *Moral Coils* and was published in 1948 based on his early short story. The play was a success in both London and New York in 1948 and 1950.
- 4 *Here we are* is a drama from a short story of the same name.
- 5 In British English, *a sort of* is more common.
- 6 I must try and answer it.- *The Listener* 1397 (*Harasawa*, 1957, p.87). According to the discussion of *Biber* (1999, p.738), 'try to do' is more often used than 'try and do'. However, in British English 'try and verb' pattern is preferred to 'try to verb' pattern in conversation.

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